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ACUTE CRISIS IN THE CHINESE EMPIRE

Admiral Seymour's Relief Forces Are Hemmed in.

THE FOREIGN ENVOYS LEAVE PEKING NORTHWARD BOUND

Their Fate and That of Many Christian Missionaries is Now in Serious Doubt—Means of Relief.

Briefly summed up, the situation in China was as follows on the afternoon of June 27th: Admiral Seymour's forces, terribly harassed, were hemmed in a few miles from Peking. Tien-Tsin was relieved from investment. The foreign envoys had left Peking under a strong escort, going north. Possibly they will be held as hostages. The fate of the missionaries was largely in doubt.

THE ADVANCE WARNINGS.

PHILADELPHIA, June 27.—Mrs. Oliver Clifford, who, with her husband, is connected with the Presbyterian mission at Tien-Tsin, writes under date of May 25th to her brother in this city as follows: "We sleep now with our firearms close at hand. Oliver and I each have a brace of pistols under our heads. I always have two valises packed, ready to flee at any moment, and the entire foreign population is anxiously watching for the first sign of an uprising. Last Monday morning, when the people awoke in the city, huge placards were found posted on the walls and fences, reading as follows: 'The heavens are displeased at the presence of the foreign dogs in China. The gods have decreed that there shall be no more rain in the whole kingdom until they are all expelled.'"

MISSION BOARDS BEWILDERED.

NEW YORK, June 27.—The secretaries of the foreign mission boards in this city and the friends of the missionaries now in China are getting more and more bewildered as rumors multiply and cable messages more depressing than cheering, come to headquarters. A letter from Dr. Edna G. Terry to her mother, dated April 25th, said she would sail for home at the earliest possible date. Mrs. Terry hopes that her daughter is already on her way to the United States. The report from Chefoo, giving a list of missionaries safe there, caused the Presbyterians some worry. Mr. Garrison of the secretary's office said: "Not one of our missionaries is mentioned in the list, unless it is Rev. Mr. Lowry. Our Mr. Lowry is with the Rev. Walter, and he has been at Pao Ting Fu, shut off by the Boxers, we thought. We do not see why our missionaries from Peking were not mentioned as well as those of the other denominations. Nor is it easy to explain how the missionaries in Peking escaped all the way to Chefoo, over 200 miles, without an escort of troops, at a time when Seymour and the allies are hard pressed in the same region. The only way they could have done it was by the help of the native Christians. Perhaps these missionaries were mentioned were outside of the city at the time they started for Chefoo. Then, too, all our missionaries in Shan Tung province were ordered to port, which must be Chefoo. From the fact that they were not mentioned we conclude that they have not yet reached that city." Rev. Dr. C. C. Crogan of the American Board of Foreign Missions said of the Congregational missionaries who are reported to be safe in Chefoo: "Dr. W. S. Ament is the superintendent of the mission at Peking, and when last heard from he was in that city. His wife and family are in this country. Miss Francis B. Patterson is of the Peking mission and the last we knew of her she was there. Rev. James H. Roberts was stationed at Kangan in the far north of China, close to the great wall. We have heard great fears for him and his associates. Rev. F. Strangue and wife and Rev. Mark Williams." Rev. Charles E. Ewing of Pao Ting Fu has sent a cable dispatch to his father-in-law, the Rev. Mr. Porter of Danvers, Mass. It said simply "Safe."

After giving this information Dr. Crogan said:

"We are getting more and more confused as these dispatches come in. But so far as we have any knowledge, no American missionary has suffered bodily injury and there is nothing to destroy our hope that the life of each of them will be spared. Our Government seems to be doing all it can and we trust that the Lord will deliver our brethren out of the fiery furnace in which they are placed. We assume that all our missionaries are safe."

At the office of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in this city it was said that there were thirty-two missionaries north of Peking who could be reached

only through Peking or Tien-Tsin. None of them could be in Chefoo, for upon their arrival the headquarters here would be notified.

BRITISH OPTIMISTS.

NEW YORK, June 27.—A dispatch to the Tribune from London, dated June 27th, says:

The optimists who have been in the

background for a week have turned out in force at the House of Commons and the political clubs are talking cheerfully about China.

So marked was the reaction from depression last night that men of influence that the public had been deceived by sensational newsmongers and Chinese liars, and that as soon as communications were reopened, would be known that the foreigners had not been murdered at Tien-Tsin; that Admiral Seymour's force had been blocked, but not cut to pieces, and that the legations had not been attacked. One view which found considerable support was that the Empress, by avoiding an open conflict with the Boxers and instructing the Generals to make common cause with them, had retained control of the situation and that the legations had escaped attack in this way and that the ministers had been escorted out of Peking and that Seymour's force had been shut out of the capital, but not been in serious danger. There was little evidence in support of this theory, yet many men of good judgment were disposed to credit it and to assume that the Empress, after making use of the regular army in dispersing the Boxers after sympathizing with them would not oppose the entry of the foreign forces, but would appeal for Russian support and depend upon a speedy break-up of the concert through jealousies and intrigues.

The British Admiralty is a slow-going institution which has an idolatrous love of red tape. It was a full hour after hour yesterday, although the dispatch of the American Admiral had been published in Washington and the German Foreign Office had heard from its Consulate at Chefoo that the third relief column had entered Tien-Tsin on the way to Peking, and that Admiral Seymour was twelve and one-half miles from that place with foreign Ministers. Owing to the sluggishness of the Admiralty in giving out dispatches, the American press is able to get official news from China in advance of the English public, since nothing is held back by the Navy Department in Washington.

Press dispatches available at midnight were meager, but it was fairly clear that the allied forces had been greatly strengthened by French, German, Japanese and Russian troops; that the march to Tien-Tsin had not been attended with serious loss and that the plight of the foreigners there had not been so serious as had been supposed. It is not known with definiteness here whether Admiral Seymour's force marched into Peking and carried the Ministers and refugees out with them or whether they were sent out under the escort of their own guards, but the opinion, prevalent at midnight among well-informed members of Parliament, that a catastrophe had been averted, and that the military and naval forces, while not sufficient to secure per-

manent occupation of Peking, were adequate for the immediate protection of the foreigners in Tien-Tsin. Mr. Broderick and Mr. Balfour were closely questioned in the House of Commons respecting China, but their information was apparently second-hand. The present Government was evidently unprepared for the crisis which has arisen, but has pulled itself together and is hunting in the dark for a policy.

ESCAPE OF THE ENGINEERS.

CHICAGO, June 27.—A special to the Tribune from Victoria, B. C., says:

Advices received by the Empress of India give graphic details of the escape from Peking and Tien-Tsin of foreigners. Of all the fugitives to reach the coast none had a harder fight for their lives than the American, French and Belgian engineers, who were surrounded by the Boxers at Peking, the terminus of the railway that was to run to Hankow.

When the Boxers attacked the station and the machine shops the engineers barricaded themselves in the machine shops and held the Chinese off for some time. They had several women with them, wives of some of them. These women loaded the men's rifle belts and otherwise assisted to repel the Boxers. Soon, though, the foreigners found their position in the shops untenable, as some of the Chinese had fished them out, set fire to a part of the building. Then they ran for it, fighting their way through the Boxers. When they had got through the Boxer lines the Chinese gave no more attention to them, but instead began to pillage and destroy the station and machine shops. Two of the Belgians then hurried to Peking, where they reported the danger of the party and called for volunteers to help them.

A number of Cossacks were dispatched to the rescue. They set out on June 2 and encountered a large crowd of Boxers forty miles from Tien-Tsin and were obliged to return, being unable to fight their way through the Boxers. The Cossacks, who numbered thirty-three, had two officers wounded.

In the meantime the engineers were between two forces of Boxers. There were thirty of them. They had taken up a position on a small hill and there they made trenches, in which they fought for an hour, holding off the Boxers to their front. They were all unconscious of the

fighting arranged that eight should be left in the trenches to hold back the Boxers while the other twenty-two including the women and children, went on towards Peking.

They had no carts and the men carried the weaker ones when they became exhausted. The march of the fugitives to Peking was an awful one. When some few miles from where they had been in-

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